

Appl. No. 09/899,552
Response dated November 30, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 30, 2005

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph found on page 18, lines 16, to page 19, line 7, of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

"Stress" as defined herein, is any acute or chronic increase in physical, metabolic, or production related pressure to the animal. It is the sum of the biological reactions to any adverse stimulus, physical, metabolic, mental or emotional, internal or external, that tends to disturb an organisms homeostasis. Should an animal's compensating reactions be inadequate or inappropriate, stress may lead to various disorders. Many events can place an animal under stress. These include, but are not limited to: disease, weaning, castration, dehorning, branding, social disruption, change in ration, temperature, restraint, exercise and parturition. Examples of social disruption include, but are not limited to: change of location, shipping, and addition or removal of animals from immediate environment. The onset of parturition (also known as "prepartum"), parturition and after parturition (also known as "postpartum"), herein collectively referred to as "periparturition" or "peripartum", are also known causes of stress in animals. The time of periparturition, the time around parturition, is hereinafter referred to as the "peripartum period". In cows the peripartum period is from about three weeks before to about three weeks after parturition. Therefore, in cows, about 8 weeks prior to parturition would be prior to onset of the periparturition stress; about 3 weeks prior to parturition to about 3 weeks postparturition would be during the periparturition stress; and after about 3 weeks postparturition would be after the peripartum stress.

Please replace the paragraph found on page 19, line 27, to page 20, line 5, with the following amended paragraph:

In a preferred embodiment, each animal is further immunized at least once during the stress. In yet a further embodiment, the antibody response of the animals of

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the population is also measured at least twice during the stress. In further embodiments of the present invention the changes in antibody responses between each measurement are added to provide a total antibody response and a total antibody response for the test animal that is greater than an average total antibody response for the population indicates that the animal is a high immune responder. In yet another embodiment of the invention, negative changes in antibody responses during stress are multiplied with a co-efficient greater than 1, for example, with a coefficient of about 1.5.